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ABSTRACT

A program initiated to demonstrate the use of retired teachers to enhance the quality of teaching by new teachers at the City University of New York is described in this report. Retired teachers were recommended by their former principals on the basis of criteria relating to mentoring functions. After a 4-day training period, mentors were assigned to schools with high teacher attrition rates where each mentor worked with three new teachers. They gave about 66 hours during the school year to each of the three teachers. Teachers, mentors, and school administrators were unanimously enthusiastic about the program. The project indicates that retired teachers, with adequate training and selection can provide helpful mentoring to new teachers, reducing attrition and improving their teaching performance through increased understanding of students, enhanced technical skills, and induction of new teachers into the social system of the school. Conclusions drawn from the program are: (1) mentors should be selected on the basis of their experience and their perceived aptitude for service as consultants; (2) a training period is essential to help retirees make the transition from teaching children to consulting with adults; (3) field services to mentors are essential to assist them in their own work; and (4) it is helpful if mentors do not have concurrent teaching duties with which mentoring may conflict. (SM)

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RETIRED TEACHERS AS CONSULTANTS TO NEW TEACHERS: A NEW INSERVICE TEACHER TRAINING MODEL

FINAL REPORT

Institute for Research and Development in Occupational Education
Center for Advanced Study in Education
The Graduate School and University Center
of the City University of New York

FIPSE Grant No: 116H5 1670
1987

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AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory is a two-year project seeking to establish and test a model system for collecting and disseminating information on model programs at AASCU-member institutions--375 of the public four-year colleges and universities in the United States.

The four objectives of the project are:

- To increase the information on model programs available to all institutions through the ERIC system
- To encourage the use of the ERIC system by AASCU institutions
- To improve AASCU's ability to know about, and share information on, activities at member institutions, and
- To test a model for collaboration with ERIC that other national organizations might adopt.

The AASCU/ERIC Model Programs Inventory Project is funded with a grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, in collaboration with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education at The George Washington University.

Retired Teachers as Consultants to New Teachers: A New Inservice Teacher Training Model

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. Project Overview

Retired teachers and supervisors working with new teachers in the New York City Schools demonstrated the effectiveness of a program that is probably the largest single mentoring program in the nation's schools. In the two-year term of the project funded by FIPSE, the program served approximately 500 new teachers in all parts of the school system--elementary, secondary, vocational and special education--with all types of preparation, from standard teacher education programs to no background in teacher education at all. Retired teachers were recommended by their former principals and selected by the Bureau of Staff Development and Training, New York City Board of Education, on the basis of criteria relating to mentorng functions. After a four-day training period, mentors were assigned to schools with high teacher attrition rates where each mentor worked with three new teachers. Mentors, serving as salaried employees of the Board of Education, gave approximately 66 hours during the school year to each of the three teachers. Evaluation included data on new teachers who benefited from mentor assistance compared with those new teachers who enjoyed only the usual supervisory assistance. Attrition rates and attendance records were compared. In addition, teachers, mentors and principals responded to questionnaires seeking information on the project and their reactions to it. Finally, a multiple case study reported a deeper inquiry into the attitudes of teachers, mentors and principals toward the mentoring program. In all, the program received the enthusiastic support of school administrators, teachers and retirees.

B. Purpose

The program was initiated to reduce attrition and improve teaching performance of new teachers in the city schools. The program was based on the premise that the expertise of retired teachers could be used economically to increase assistance to new teachers on the basis of one-to-one peer relationships without raising teacher concern about evaluation by supervisors.

C. Background and Origins

The program was initiated in 1984 on a pilot basis by the Division of Personnel of the New York City Board of Education in consultation with personnel from the Center for Advanced Study in Education (CASE) of the City University of New York and from Barnard College. Sixteen retired teachers served as mentors for 45 new teachers in 13 elementary schools and one junior high school. In the following year, the Fund for Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) of the U.S. Department of Education awarded CASE a grant in collaboration with Barnard College and the New York City Board of Education for training mentors and evaluation. The Division of Personnel extended the program to 63 mentors serving approximately 180

teachers in 47 schools, including senior high schools as well as elementary and junior high schools, in the 1985-86 school year. Effectiveness of the program led to continued support by FIPSE and expansion of the program to 100 mentors and almost 300 teachers in the 1986-87 school year. While FIPSE has contributed $143,745 over two years for training and evaluation, the Board of Education has carried the major cost of the program--reimbursement of mentors and field supervision--committing $250,000 in 1985-86 and $500,000 in 1986-87. Barnard College made generous in-kind contributions of facilities and resources for meetings as well as participation of professional personnel as otherwise reported herein.

D. Project Description

Mentors were selected by the Division of Personnel from a pool of retirees recommended by principals in the schools from which they had retired. Principals had been asked to consider the following qualities as criteria for recommendations: a positive attitude towards self and teaching as a profession, an ability to build trusting relationships and work effectively on a one-to one basis, an ability to communicate well orally and in writing, a minimum of six years of teaching experience on more than one grade level or subject in the New York City schools, a model of exemplary teaching. Far more retirees responded to an invitation to apply than could by accommodated. The 1986-87 selection procedure included critiquing videotapes of an actual lesson taught by a new teacher. The Division of Personnel evaluated potential mentors' responses on the basis of their ability to analyze teaching performance, and the nature of their recommendations for assistance to the teacher. The mentors selected in 1986 had an average of 24 years experience in New York City schools; more than three quarters had retired in the previous two years. Many of them had had experience in assisting new teachers as teacher trainers, cooperating teachers for student teachers, or as supervisors.

Two Barnard College faculty members directed training of the mentors with members of the Division of Personnel participating both in planning and conduct. Mentors took part in a four-day summer workshop prior to commencing their service. Training emphasized the nature of consultant service as distinct from teaching or supervising, approaches in working with adults as peers, techniques in identifying problems of the new teacher, new curriculum developments, and ways to assist teachers in the manifold range of teaching functions.

Mentors were assigned to schools in those districts in the city which had experienced the highest attrition rates among new teachers. In the term of the project, approximately 150 retirees worked directly in the classroom with some 500 new teachers. Mentors are salaried employees of the Board of Education and are assigned to give approximately 66 hours during the school year to each of three teachers. They followed a schedule set by the Bureau of Staff Development and Training which allocated hours to be given each month to the new teachers. Mentors consulted with teachers, developed work plans with them, gave demonstrations, discussed planning, provided coaching on recommended practices, assisted in establishing routines, offered examples of classroom management and discipline, and served as sounding boards for teachers who felt that they could express their problems and anxieties with mentors who had no evaluative function.

During the year, three additional seminars were conducted at Barnard College, for mentors, focusing on their concerns and problems and on educational needs perceived by the central school administration. The Bureau of Staff Development and Training provided field supervision for the mentors, monitoring the program and offering assistance. Field supervisors visited the mentors, observed classroom operations and held occasional meetings of small groups of mentors with whom they worked.

In May of 1987, a dissemination conference was conducted to which persons conducting other mentor programs in the State of New York were invited. The conference provided opportunity to disseminate the nature and operation of the retired teacher-mentor program and to discuss operation and problems.

E. Project Results

Success of the project in the 1985-86 year was documented by an educational evaluation, a sociological inquiry, and a multiple case study undertaken by CASE staff members. Comparisons were made between new teachers with mentors and those without such assistance. The substantial salary increase in 1985 for beginning teachers in the city schools reduced attrition throughout the system, and the attrition rate for new teachers was slightly better for mentored than non-mentored teachers. However, mentored teachers reported receiving far more help than did non-mentored teachers in such areas as planning lessons, classroom management, improving instructional skills, and learning administrative procedures. They gave great credit to mentors for moral support and encouragement. Principals also responded to a questionnaire. They ranked those teaching activities which they regarded as most important and reported that mentors were giving assistance in precisely these areas. Almost all of them liked the program well enough to ask for its continuance in their schools the following year.

The response of the mentors was a matter of sociological interest. Mentors proved to be still enthusiastic about teaching, even in so-called difficult schools, after an average of 24 years in the system. They regarded mentoring as an opportunity to do something useful, to make a contribution to new teachers, to use their expertise to help the young, as "a second chance to help." Many credited mentoring with easing their transition to retirement, enabling them to move gently out of the world of work.

In each year a multiple case study reviewed operation of the project in six schools, two at each level (elementary, junior high, senior high) which were selected on a "best cases" principle, i.e. the program was working smoothly and there was a minimum of personnel turnover. The purpose was to secure through classroom observations and interviews impressions that might not be caught in paper-and-pencil questionnaires. Teachers, mentors and school administrators were unanimously enthusiastic about the program. Supervisors were delighted to have additional help to give frequent direct assistance to new teachers, most of whom had come into the schools without training to teach.

F. Summary and Conclusions

The project indicated that retired teachers, with careful selection and adequate training, can provide helpful mentoring to new teachers, reducing attrition and improving their teaching performance, through increasing understanding of students, enhancing technical skills, and inducting new teachers into the social system of the school. The following conclusions may be drawn:

- Mentors should be selected on the basis of their experience and their perceived aptitude for service as consultants.

- A training period is essential to help retirees make the transition from teaching children to consulting with adults.

- It is helpful if mentors do not have concurrent teaching duties with which mentoring may conflict.
- Field services to mentors are essential to assist them in their work.
- Supervisors are enthusiastic in praise of assistance that mentors give in the induction of new teachers; new teachers appreciate the help.
- Retirees take great satisfaction in rendering service to new teachers and in maintaining their professional activity.

Body of Report

A. Project Overview

Retired teachers and supervisors working with new teachers in the New York City Schools demonstrated the effectiveness of a program that is probably the largest single mentoring program in the nation's schools. In the two-year term of the project funded by FIPSE, the program served approximately 500 new teachers in all parts of the school system--elementary, secondary, vocational and special education--with all types of preparation, from standard teacher education programs to no background in teacher education at all. Retired teachers were recommended by their former principals and selected by the Bureau of Staff Development and Training, New York City Board of Education, on the basis of criteria relating to mentorng functions. After a four-day training period, mentors were assigned to schools with high teacher attrition rates where each mentor worked with three new teachers. Mentors, serving as salaried employees of the Board of Education, gave approximately 66 hours during the school year to each of the three teachers. Evaluation included data on new teachers who benefited from mentor assistance compared with those new teachers who enjoyed only the usual supervisory assistance. Attrition rates and attendance records were compared. In addition, teachers, mentors and principals responded to questionnaires seeking information on the project and their reactions to it. Finally, a multiple case study reported a deeper inquiry into the attitudes of teachers, mentors and principals toward the mentoring program. In all, the program received the enthusiastic support of school administrators, teachers and retirees.

B. Purpose

The project sought to demonstrate the use of retired teachers to enhance the quality of teaching by new teachers. The program was designed cooperatively by personnel from the City University of New York, the Division of Personnel of the New York City Board of Education, and the Education Program of Barnard College, Columbia University. The Division of Personnel reported the loss of 779 employees in the year ending June 30, 1983, of whom 73 percent left before the end of one term or 5 months. Reduction of this attrition and improving teaching quality were major concerns of this and many other school systems.

The overall goal of this project was to demonstrate a new model for support to teachers during a highly vulnerable yet formative stage in the new teacher's professional development. The specific objectives of this project were to demonstrate: (1) the utilization of the skills and understanding of retired persons in teacher training, (2) a process for supporting new teachers and upgrading their skills, and (3) a means of improving the retention rate of new teachers.

C. Background and Origins

The program was initiated in 1984 on a pilot basis by the Division of Personnel of the New York City Board of Education in consultation with personnel from the Center for Advanced Study in Education (CASE) of the City University of New York and from Barnard College. Sixteen retired teachers served as mentors for 45 new teachers in 13 elementary schools and one junior high school. In the following year, the Fund for Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) of the U.S. Department of Education awarded CASE a grant in collaboration with Barnard College and the New York City Board of Education for training mentors and for evaluation. The Division of Personnel extended the program to 63 mentors serving for approximately 180 teachers in 47 schools, including senior high schools as well as elementary and junior high schools, in the 1985-86 school year. Effectiveness of the program led to continued support by FIPSE and expansion of the program to 100 mentors and almost 300 teachers in the 1986-87 school year. While FIPSE has contributed $143,745 over two years for training and evaluation, the Board of Education has carried the major cost of the program--reimbursement of mentors and field supervision--committing $250,000 in 1985-86 and $500,000 in 1986-87. Barnard College made generous in-kind contributions of facilities and resources for meetings as well as participation of professional personnel as otherwise reported herein.

In the Mentor/New Teacher Program, The Bureau of Staff Development and Training of the New York City Board of Education took pains to set up a carefully thought out series of steps to involve administrators within a decentralized school system which includes 32 community school districts with as many school boards and superintendents. Administrative tasks to be accomplished included securing the cooperation of community school leaders, recruiting retired teachers, selecting the best prospect as mentors, training retired teachers to serve as consultants--a new role for them, matching retirees with schools most in need of mentors for new teachers, setting up reporting and reimbursement procedures, providing field services for the mentors, and evaluating the program.

D. Project Description

1. Introducing the Program

As a first step, the project team established agreement on the nature of mentorship, personal preconditions for mentoring, and overall mentor responsibilities. A mentor is defined as:

1. A Role Model - Gives examples and shares experiences
2. A Motivator - Helps new teachers to explore ways to involve pupils in learning
3. A Communicator - Listens carefully and uses new teacher responses to improve learning for pupils

4. An Advisor - Gives feedback and clarification
5. A Guide - Assists new teachers to set up routines and understand the school organization
6. A Demonstrator - Helps new teachers by demonstrating lessons for teaching specific learning objectives
7. An Enabler - Helps new teachers to become self-evaluative
8. A Resource - Provides appropriate materials and directs new teacher to in-school and Board of Education resources
9. An Assessor - Monitors progress and impact of learning in the classroom
10. A Friend - Develops a relationship of trust and confidentiality and support

Preconditions for Mentoring

To build a positive mentor/new teacher relationship, a mentor:

1. Establishes rapport
2. Taps new teacher's prior experiences
3. Builds trust and exchange
4. Maintains confidentiality
5. Encourages new teacher
6. Conveys empathy
7. Listens carefully
8. Focuses on one or two challenges at a time
9. Exemplifies flexibility

Overall Mentor Responsibilities

1. To interact with school staff in a professional manner and to help the new teacher understand how the school works
2. To implement a school's policies and practices as outlined in school handbooks, memoranda, etc
3. To carry out all responsibilities with new teachers
4. To hold pre- and post-lesson conferences
5. To give feedback to new teachers regarding their strengths and areas to work on
6. To use lesson guides with new teachers to evaluate and facilitate their progress
7. To help new teachers understand pupil learning and developmental needs at every school level
8. To help new teachers develop a sense of accountability for pupil learning
9. To promote a sense of professional responsibility and opportunity.

2. Recruiting Mentors

The Bureau of Staff Development and Training secured a district-by-district print-out of teachers who had retired in the past five years and mailed a letter about the program to each principal enclosing a copy of the retirees list in his or her district. Principals were asked to recommend from that list retired teachers who might be good choices as mentors. To help them in the process, a few criteria were suggested:

1. A positive attitude towards self and teaching as a profession
2. The ability to build trusting relationships and work effectively on a one-to-one basis
3. An ability to communicate well orally and in writing
4. A minimum of six years of teaching experience on more than one grade level or in a subject in the New York City schools
5. Service representing a model of exemplary teaching.

The next step was to contact directly retirees who had been recommended either from the print-out of previous retirees or from the principal's nomination of those whom he/she knew to be planning retirement. The letter informed the retiree (or retiree-to-be) of his/her recommendation by the principal and of the criteria the principal had used.

The letter also states some conditions of employment:

- Assignment for a total of 198 hours
- Reimbursement on a per session basis at the current contractual rate for teacher trainers
- Completion of 18 hours of training in program assistance from the staff of the Bureau of Staff Development and Training and local college prior to assignment to a school
- Eligibility to continue other part-time service in the schools if interested.

3. Selecting Candidates

Interested retirees were also asked to complete a questionnaire to indicate preferences as to school assignment and information on previous teaching experience.

Letters were sent to 433 retirees, and 273 retirees indicated interest. Of these, 137 reported preferences or subject backgrounds that made later placement probable. This number proved to be greater than funds available for appointment in the schools, enabling the Bureau of Staff Development and Training to employ further selective procedures. One was a review of candidates' experience for indication of previous experience in helping relationships: as a cooperating teacher for student teachers, as a teacher trainer in any one of a number of special programs (e.g., remedial reading, bilingual education), or as a supervisor. Second was an informal assessment of potential skill as a consultant. Applicants were asked to view a videotape of an actual classroom performance by a new teacher and to respond to it through a written analysis of the lesson and suggestions of ways in which a mentor could help the teacher. In preparation for this procedure and for use in the summer training sessions, the Bureau filmed and the Center for Advanced Study in Education edited eight videotapes, four at the elementary level. In response to the invitation, a few retirees chose not to participate, but most came, not

knowing what to expect but rising to the challenge. Candidates viewed the tape twice, once for a general impression, once to analyze the tape.

The Bureau of Staff Development and Training had prepared an answer form that focussed on three areas: Lesson Planning, Classroom Management, and Curriculum. Candidates were asked to list Strengths, Weaknesses, and Solutions for each of these areas. To assist in evaluation of candidates' responses, the Bureau prepared a rating form identifying significant elements on each tape and possible solutions to problems. Eighty persons participating in the observation were selected for training.

4. Training Retired Teachers to Work as Mentors*

Training sessions, which differed for potential elementary and secondary mentors, were conducted at Barnard College, Columbia University, in the summer before assignment of mentors to schools. Each session ran four days for a total of 18 hours. Trainees had a choice of either of two sessions offered on each level. Additional training was provided in three half-day large group seminars conducted during the school year, one each in Fall, Winter and Spring as well as in local small group meetings and during site visits by staff of the Board of Education. The large group training design built on the pilot experience of 1984-85 and, in the second year, refined the program of the first FIPSE project year of 1985-86. It was planned and conducted by Dr. Susan Riemer Sacks and Dean Katherine Knight Wilcox, Dr. Bernadette Pepin and members of the Bureau of Staff Development and Training of the Division of Personnel.

The training was designed to help the mentors translate their expertise in working with students into skills and perspectives necessary for working with teachers. The goal for training was to help mentors utilize their abilities to motivate, not dominate, the new teachers in their growth toward professional competence. The training model was based on a participative format that enabled the retired teachers to develop an understanding of mentoring. Their active involvement and participation in the workshops fostered the complex transition from retired teacher to mentor.

Since training took place during the summer prior to assignment as mentors, the goal was to define mentoring by (1) clarifying the components of the mentoring role, and (2) helping the mentors to view themselves as having the skills and abilities to make the transition to this role. To accomplish the goal for initial training, retired teachers were helped:

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*This section was prepared by Susan R. Sacks and Katherine K. Wilcox, Barnard College, Columbia University.

to draw upon their recollections of their early teaching experiences

to recall the supports they needed and received as novice teachers

to assess their knowledge, skill and strengths as teachers which would help them as mentors

to develop strategies for building a trusting relationship with the new teachers

to develop strategies for supporting new teachers in specific teaching and planning skills

to understand the mentor role in relation to the school structure and approaches for establishing professional relations in the interest of the new teachers.

Each group met for four days, following essentially the same program activities developed collaboratively by staff members of Barnard College and the Board of Education. An abbreviated schedule follows:

Day 1: Introductions; Project Background and History; Training Goals and Workshop Format; Defining the Mentoring Role and Responsibilities; Strategies for Developing the Mentoring Relationship; Video Analysis of Classroom Management; Distribution of Mentor Handbook; Evaluation

Day 2: Curriculum Overview of Social Studies, Science, Communication Arts, and Mathematics by Subject Matter Specialists; Techniques for Advising New Teachers on Classroom Management; Evaluation

Day 3: Overview by Testing Specialist on Teacher-Made and Standardized Tests; Observation Guide and Video Analysis of New Teacher Lesson; Strategies for Working with New Teachers on Lessons; Evaluation

Day 4: Special Education Overview by Special Education Supervisor; Observing and Analyzing Video of Pre and Post-Lesson Conferences between Mentors and New Teachers; Administrative Matters for the Mentors (making contacts, school placements, meeting the administrators, record keeping, mentor hours); Dialogue with Experienced Mentors; Redefining the Mentor Role; Evaluation.

The preservice workshops included discussion in large and small groups, role playing, demonstrations, and analysis of videotapes. Mentors applied a problem solving approach to explore the challenges which they could expect to experience in their new roles. Daily assessment of the training sessions elicited mentors' reactions and suggestions that were incorporated in succeeding sessions.

Role plays were a feature of each day's activities and provided practice for the transition from retired teacher to mentor. Role plays simulated the initial contact between mentor and

new teacher and interaction between them with regard to classroom management, skill development and lesson planning, as well as the mentor's role with supervisors in the school.

A variety of materials was distributed, culled both from the professional literature and from curriculum materials and teaching suggestions prepared by the New York City Board of Education for use in in-service training. Areas covered in the "handouts" included classroom management, curriculum planning, lesson planning, discipline, classroom climate and environment, questioning techniques, individualizing instruction and grouping, developing thinking skills, and motivating learning.

The second phase of training comprised three half-day sessions conducted during the school year and addressed to the needs of the mentors in working with their teachers. These sessions provided opportunity for mentors to share their ideas about their new roles, to identify effective ways of working and strategies to solve problems which they encountered. Issues were raised which members of the Bureau of Staff Development and Training had identified from their school visits, classroom observations, mentor logs and conversations with mentors. These issues included individualizing instruction, organizing learning centers, motivating lessons, involving students more actively in learning, classroom management, accommodating mainstreamed students, and interpreting test results. The modus operandi is these sessions included brief presentations, large and small group discussion, role playing, and the viewing and critiquing of videotapes of classroom transactions.

A staff of eight New York City Board of Education field supervisors made three site visits to each mentor during the school year. These on-site visits provided opportunities for the promotion of the mentor-new teacher relationship. The effectiveness of the mentor was assessed in the actual in-class situation. New teachers were polled on the nature of the mentor's assistance. Mentors were advised of the reactions of the new teachers as well as their needs as observed by the Field Supervisor. Recommendations of strategies for meeting these needs were made.

In addition to the large group meetings described above, site visits were also followed-up by small group meetings of mentors and a field supervisor. These meetings provided additional opportunities for the interchange of ideas among a peer group of mentors and gave time for further development of the Work Plan concept.

5. Assignment of Mentors

Assignment of mentors proved to be a time-consuming task, involving telephone negotiations among the Bureau of Staff Development and Training, the Personnel Offices in the

Community School Districts, School Principals, and the new mentors. Decisions were made in the central Personnel Division as to which school districts were to be served, the major consideration being service to those districts with the largest teacher turnover rates. The Bureau then contacted these district offices, discussing with them individual schools which would be asked to participate. School districts were given the choice of making their own placements or having the central office do so for them. The Bureau of Staff Development worked with school districts to assign mentors to places where they would be welcomed and where they would want to go.

Since each mentor was to serve three teachers, there had to be at least three new teachers in each school.*

In secondary schools, it was not likely that there would be three new teachers in any one department. Accordingly, an effort was made to locate schools in which there might be three new teachers in areas with some relationship, such as English and Social Studies, or Science and Mathematics. In general, schools were chosen where the principals were most eager to have mentors and where attrition of new teachers had been highest.

Minor, but time-consuming problems arose also with placement of mentors. These included travel, unfamiliar location, unfamiliar school, and school with poor reputation. Mentors appeared to prize control over their lives that came with their status as retirees; they were not susceptible to being "pushed around"! Efforts were made to keep travel time to a minimum; yet some mentors traveled cheerfully for an hour or more from their home to the school where they were assigned.

6. Reception of Mentors in the Schools

Following assignment, a letter was sent to the principal with further description of the program and the names of mentors assigned to the school. Mentors were sent a packet that included attendance and log forms and a copy of the letter sent to the principal, with instructions to call the principal to make an appointment for an interview. In general, principals were delighted with the "extra pair of hands" available for assistance to new teachers. Because the program was experimental, principals were asked to make assignment to

*For purposes of evaluation, six new teachers were actually needed, three to serve as a "treatment" group with mentors, and three to serve as a "control" group without mentors.

teachers at random so that comparisons could be made between mentored and non-mentored new teachers. Had principals used their judgment, project evaluators would not have been able to determine whether principals were assigning mentors to the weakest teachers who needed help desperately or to the strongest new teachers for whom principals might anticipate the greatest growth and therefore the highest return on the investment of resources.

By and large the teachers and the mentors assigned to them proved to be compatible. Age and gender differences did not appear to present a problem. In a few cases where teachers rejected the idea of assistance from mentors, new assignments were made. In secondary schools, mentors frequently worked with teachers in fields other than their own since there might not be three new teachers in a single department. Except where there were fundamental differences -- as between vocational and academic fields --the "mismatch" was more theoretical than real.

7. The Mentor at Work

Whatever a mentor can do to help a teacher, he or she does! A multiple case study appended to this report describes in some detail the myriad activities mentors engaged upon. Briefly, these activities ranged from personal support to technical assistance in the form of classroom management, lesson planning, decorating the classroom, keeping records, dealing with parents, curriculum development, and the like. Most of the mentor's time was spent in the classroom--observing the teacher and serving as a role model by helping with discipline, leading small groups, working with individual students, and occasionally teaching a lesson to demonstrate a point discussed with the teacher. Much time was also spent with the teacher before school, in preparation or lunch periods, and after school. This time was used in helping the teacher plan lessons and prepare teaching materials, discussing elements of teaching and classroom management the mentor had observed, analyzing individual students' behavior and solutions to discipline problems, planning evaluation of learning, completing the various records that are often the bane of a new teacher's existence.

Mentors were given a schedule by the Bureau of Staff Development and Training in order to assure a reasonable distribution of time spent with the teachers. A total of 66 hours was to be spent with each teacher during the year. Approximately twice as much time was to be spent in the early part of the year (and at the beginning of the second semester for secondary school teachers) as in the rest of the year, except for added time at the end of the year when need for help was anticipated in doing records and reports. Since each mentor worked with three

teachers, mentors worked for 198 hours each year. They made their own arrangements with teachers and were able to squeeze in free periods for vacations as was their right as retirees!

8. Relations with Supervisors

It was important to distinguish the work of the mentor from the responsibilities of the principal and assistant principals. Mentors were sensitive to this distinction, with the result that supervisors reported no intrusion upon their area of operation. Instead, they were appreciative of two elements. One was the time that the mentor could give to new teachers, time that supervisors had to distribute among all the teachers in the school while also having responsibility for a host of other administrative and instructional duties. Second, they recognized the value of peer assistance, particularly to new teachers who might be concerned over the evaluative implications of a supervisor's visits. Supervisors recognized the fact that mentors were not licensed to participate in evaluation of teachers and did not press mentors for evaluative comments which could destroy the peer relationship of mentor and teacher.

9. Field Supervision and Training

While mentors entering their new career showed an average of almost 25 years experience as teachers, they were tyros for the most part as consultants. For this reason, a program of field supervision was established from the very start of the program. Supervision was initially conducted by three members of the Bureau of Staff Development and Training. Later, four of the "pioneer" mentors--persons who had worked in the program from the beginning were also called upon to serve as guides for the mentors. Field supervisors visited mentors two or three times a year and observed the mentors in practice--in classrooms and in their conferences with new teachers. These visits revealed problems in observation skills and currency ("up-to-dateness") in curriculum development. These issues were attended to in later summer training programs for mentors. (See instructions and forms for Work Plan and Site Visits in Appendix.)

In order to establish more focussed programs in mentors' work with new teachers, a "Work Plan" form was constructed, and mentors were required to develop such a plan with each of their teachers. These Work Plans were based on agreement between mentor and teacher as to areas in which improvement was needed, and a plan was worked out setting forth procedures to reach the goal that was agreed upon. Field supervisors met with the mentors assigned to them in small groups to explain the work form and subsequently reviewed the Work Plans individually with mentors.

In addition, field supervisors were able to give support to mentors who were having problems, sometimes related to initial resistance on the part of a new teacher, sometimes stemming from the total lack of preparation of a new teacher, sometimes related to the feeling of hopelessness of a new teacher who felt overwhelmed in his/her first teaching experience. Of prime importance, too, was the telephone connection to the Bureau of Staff Development and Training. At the end of the line was an extremely able and sympathetic staff assistant who was always available to answer questions and solve problems that arose.

10. Reporting and Remuneration

Operating with about 100 mentors and 300 teachers in a single year, the program was obliged to set up a reasonable control system. Mentors were free to set their own schedule within the pattern established by the central office, but for remuneration purposes they documented their service by signing in or using a time card in the same manner as other teachers in the school where they worked. In addition, they were responsible to fill out a monthly log which indicated both the time given and the nature of service provided. The log not only met the auditors' needs, but it also helped to document the program. A review of mentors' logs provided a brief overview of the nature of the program.

E. Project Results

Federal funding helped to support a three-way evaluation an analysis of educational effects and attrition rates among new teachers, a sociological study focusing on mentoring as an activity in retirement for educational professionals, and a multiple case study. Dr. Theodore Abramson, Professor of Education, Queens College of the City University of New York, directed the educational analysis which grew out of attendance and teacher attrition data obtained from the Board of Education's records and from questionnaires completed by teachers, mentors and principals. Dr. Rolf Meyersohn, Professor of Sociology, Graduate School and University Center, City University of New York, conducted the sociological study based on a survey of retirees' reactions to their experiences as mentors. Dr. Milton J. Gold, a Project Director for the Center for Advanced Study in Education of the City University, took responsibility for the multiple case study. Summaries of the evaluation reports and the multiple case study appear in the Appendix.

1. Attrition and Attendance Data*

The program was initiated largely because of a very high rate of attrition of new teachers. In the year the progam was started, a new salary schedule provided new teachers with a very substantial increase. As a result, attrition declined dramatically both for teachers with mentors and those without mentors. The retention rate of mentored teachers, however, and their attendance rate--often a sign of job satisfaction and willingness to continue on the job--were slightly greater than that for teachers without mentors during the period from October 1985 to March 1986. In the schools with the mentoring program, 3 of the 160 mentored teachers (1.88 percent) and 4 of the 113 non-mentored teachers (3.54 percent) left the system. In the comparable schools, where no mentoring took place 4 teachers out of 88 (4.54 percent) left. Projecting attendance for the full school year, one would expect the mean number of absences for the mentored and non-mentored teachers at 5 and 6.3 days respectively. There was no difference (mean of 7.0) in the number of absences between the two groups of teachers for those who completed the school year. In 1986-87, their second year of teaching, the retention rates of these cohorts who began in 1985-86 were 84.5 and 80.1 percent for mentored and non-mentored teachers respectively.

2. Educational Data

Mentored and non-mentored teachers in the same schools were asked to respond to a questionnaire during the first half of the year and again toward the end of the school year. Chi-square analyses comparing the responses of the mentored and non-mentored groups yielded significant differences ($p < .01$) on 40 of the 43 activities (see listing) in favor of the mentored groups. The same analyses were carried out on the mentored teachers' pre- and post- responses to test for differences in perceptions from the end of the first to the end of the second semester. Teachers reported that mentors were as helpful at the end of the year as at the beginning, with a change in helpfulness perceived in only one of the 43 items. These results were confirmed when the data were reanalyzed by comparing the mean rating of each item assigned by the mentored and non-mentored teachers (pre-) and the mentored teachers(pre/post). (See mean helpfulness ratings in accompanying list.) There were significant mean differences between the mentored and non-mentored teachers in favor of the mentored teachers in 38 of the 43 comparisons and no significant differences between the pre- and post-ratings of the mentored teachers. In summary:

*This section and the section on Educational Data were prepared by Theodore Abramson, Professor of Education, Queens College, City University of New York.

Activities in Which New Teachers Reported Significant Assistance from Mentors Comparison of Ratings Given by Mentored and Non-mentored Teachers.

ACTIVITIES		Mentored Teachers (by mentor)			Non-Mentored Teachers (by supervisor)			P
The mentor (supervisor) assisted me in		N	X	SD	N	X	SD	
1. Planning lessons	1.	100	3.91	1.06	57	3.51	1.21	*
2. Preparing student assignments	2.	81	3.58	1.11	49	3.08	1.38	*
3. Locating instructional and resource materials	3.	100	3.83	1.06	54	3.09	1.47	**
4. Obtaining instructional materials	4.	82	3.84	1.00	52	3.15	1.29	**
5. Using instructional materials	5.	76	3.71	.99	48	3.15	1.34	**
6. Using audio-visual materials	6.	39	3.33	1.33	42	2.79	1.47	NS
7. Listing observable student performance	7.	88	3.93	.92	46	3.24	1.32	**
8. Specifying criteria for pupil performance	8.	90	3.88	.91	52	3.19	121	**
9. Motivating students	9.	109	4.19	.81	56	3.30	1.31	**
10. Asking questions effectively	10.	106	4.03	.89	55	3.40	1.31	**
11. Using reinforcement processes	11.	94	3.89	.94	53	3.19	1.27	**
12. Disciplining students	12.	97	4.09	.95	56	3.39	1.22	**
13. Establishing routines	13.	110	4.22	.94	52	3.52	1.29	**
14. Setting up the classroom	14.	77	3.82	1.13	48	3.29	1.40	*
15. Preparing bulletin board displays	15.	53	3.72	1.31	37	2.97	1.57	*
16. Providing for safety in the classroom	16.	52	3.73	1.14	47	3.21	1.38	*
17. Keeping records	17.	70	4.11	1.08	49	3.14	1.46	**
18. Assessing student work regularly	18.	64	3.88	1.06	45	3.11	1.37	**
19. Recording student performance regularly	19.	58	3.67	1.05	43	3.09	1.32	*
20. Forming reading groups	20.	29	3.34	1.23	33	3.15	1.48	NS
21. Working with reading groups	21.	40	3.78	1.05	30	3.07	1.57	*
22. Establishing small group instruction	22.	44	3.70	1.15	37	3.14	1.42	*
23. Working with small groups	23.	50	3.82	1.19	37	3.03	1.46	**
24. Identifying individual academic needs	24.	70	3.80	1.06	43	3.21	1.36	*
25. Interpreting test data	25.	37	3.49	1.12	36	3.06	1.39	NS
26. Using test data	26.	36	3.78	1.10	40	2.95	1.38	**
27. Individualizing instruction	27.	55	3.82	1.14	44	3.02	1.41	**
28. Observing model lessons	28.	84	4.04	1.08	45	3.07	1.45	**
29. Critiquing my own teaching performance	29.	112	4.33	.04	54	3.44	1.36	**
30. Experimenting with instructional methods	30.	79	3.99	.97	47	3.15	1.35	**
31. Developing a teaching style	31.	89	4.10	.97	48	3.15	1.41	**
32. Presenting me with model lessons	32.	66	4.03	1.29	49	3.31	1.36	**
33. Interpreting and using curriculum bulletins	33.	58	4.05	.94	36	2.86	1.52	**
34. Understanding the administrative structure	34.	81	4.06	1.07	48	3.10	1.39	**
35. Interacting with colleagues	35.	70	4.06	.88	48	3.40	1.30	**
36. Approaching supervisors for assistance	36.	82	4.07	.89	53	3.58	1.41	*
37. Interacting with supervisors	37.	71	4.08	.94	51	3.45	1.43	**
38. Referring student for support services	38.	43	3.79	1.06	52	3.19	1.43	*
39. Obtaining information on pupil background	39.	33	3.58	1.06	51	3.27	1.30	NS
40. Contacting parent	40.	44	3.68	1.05	55	3.47	1.29	NS
41. Initiating special education referrals	41.	22	3.59	1.37	41	2.90	1.41	
42. Preparing referral documents	42.	22	3.59	1.37	37	3.05	1.78	NS
43. Other _____	43.	11	4.82	.60	9	3.00	1.80	**

*$p<.05$; **$p<.01$

These findings indicate that: (1) mentored teachers perceive the assistance they received at a significantly higher degree of helpfulness than the perceptions reported by their non-mentored counterparts who received the normal school support services, and (2) mentored teachers reported equally high levels of perceived support at the end of the second semester as they did at the end of the first semester even though the actual number of contact hours had been reduced by approximately 50 percent.

The teachers reported that the mentors had the greatest impact on their performance as new teachers in terms of: (1) moral support, encouragement, and building self-confidence; (2) lesson planning and teaching tips (curriculum, pacing, questioning, motivating); and (3) classroom management, organization, and discipline.

The mentors also completed a questionnaire containing the same list of activities included in the teacher questionnaire. In addition, they rated their degree of success in providing assistance to the one teacher with whom they had been most successful. As might be expected, the ratings in general were high. However, the mentors' self ratings of their success were somewhat less positive than the ratings that the mentored teachers gave them. For example, on the average only 16 percent of the mentors gave themselves the top rating ("5") whereas 35 percent of the mentored teachers rated them at the top.

Thirty principals also responded to a questionnaire. The evaluator's words again:

> Of the 30 principals who responded to a questionnaire, all of the secondary (eleven H.S/three JHS) and 14 of the 16 elementary school principals indicated that they would like to have a mentor in their school next year. Their suggestions for program improvement included: (1) beginning program at the start of the school year; (2) having more hours, more mentors and greater flexibility in allocating these resources; (3) exercise of greater control of the program by the school.
>
> Based on the responses of the teachers, mentors and principals, it is clear that the program was perceived as a success.

3. Sociological Evaluation*

Toward the end of the school year, mentors were given a questionnaire which addressed them in their role as retirees from full-time teaching. The main focus was to determine thesuccess of such a program as a transition to retirement, and to gain insight into the ways in which work-life can be gradually rather than abruptly reduced. Most mentors did not see themselves as being at all "retired," but in a different phase in their careers, one which for most was more pleasant and less stressful than their former one.

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*This section was prepared by Rolf Meyersohn, Professor of Sociology, Graduate School and University Center, City University of New York.

Perhaps most striking is the enormous enthusiasm that mentors have for this work. In both years in which the survey was carried out, over 90 percent said that they have enjoyed their work as mentors "very much." Only 12 to 15 percent like mentoring less than full-time teaching; each year about an equal number said they like it either more than full-time teaching or to the same degree. The position of mentor, in the opinion of the majority of respondents (52 percent the first year year, 75 percent the second year) is more highly esteemed than that of the teacher.

Given this level of enthusiasm, it is not surprising that an overwhelming majority -- 82 percent in the first year, 87 percent in the second year -- said that they would mentor again the following year if asked, a factor important in terms of work force reliability.

Asked why they chose to mentor, they said they wanted to do something useful, to make a contribution to new teachers, to use their experience to help the newcomer. They reported establishing a strong interpersonal relationship with their proteges that was both task-oriented and personal; they had become involved in the success of their new colleagues. With respect to their own lives, mentoring made their own transition to retirement easier, providing a flexible but formal structure to their days; it afforded companionship with fellow retirees and former colleagues as well as with the new teachers; and because mentoring is seen as a very meaningful and useful activity, it built a sense of mastery and achievement.

It is clear that although mentoring constitutes a shift from full-time work, it encompasses aspects of a new career with its own set of rewards and incentives. Yet unlike conventional careers, mentoring is open-ended and can be either short-lived or continuing.

From the point of view of the mentors, this program has been a resounding success. It enables retired teachers to move gently out of the world of work. They experience a sense of mastery and esteem, they enjoy vitally needed companionship, and they are given an opportunity to render a useful service.

4. Dissemination

Dissemination efforts have included news releases, communication with educational journals, conduct of a symposium of teacher mentoring, and publication and distribution of a training manual. Articles have been prepared for educational journals, and one has appeared in the AACTE Briefs.

On May 18, 1987, the project conducted a Symposium on Teacher Mentoring as a dissemination conference. The conference drew some fifty persons responsible for mentoring projects in 13 different mentoring programs. The symposium was organized as an "Issue Oriented Work Conference." It provided opportunity for participants in three groups to discuss

problems of organization, program initiation, selection and training of mentors, field supervision and services, and financial aspects. A variety of manterials was distributed describing programs in operation. A 16 page reort was distributed to participants as well as to those projects in New York State that were not represented at the conference. A copy of the report is included in the Appendix.

Passing the Torch: Retired Teachers as Mentors for New Teachers has been prepared as a manual for school districts and institutions of higher education that are interested in mounting mentoring programs. The manual runs to 50 pages. It describes the initiation and conduct of the program, presents a summary of the training offered to mentors, reports the evaluation of the project and includes administrative forms. The manual is being distributed to some 500 state and county educational agencies, school districts and institutions of higher education. A copy is appended to this report.

Included in the manual is the multiple case study, based on an in-depth review of the program in 12 schools that includes analysis of logs kep by mentors, reporting on visits to the classroom of the teachers in those schools, and the reactions to the program secured in interviews with teachers, mentors and supervisors. The multiple case study is appended to this report as a separate document and is available on request.

PROJECT PUBLICATIONS

Gold, Milton J., and Pepin, Bernadette. Passing the Torch: Retired Teachers as Mentors for New Teachers. New York: Center for Advanced Study in Education, City University of New York, 1987.

Center for Advanced Study in Education, City University of New York. Retired Teachers as Consultants to New Teachers. First Year Report. New York: The Center, 1986.

_____. Symposium on Teacher Mentoring: An Issue-Oriented Work Conference. New York: The Center, 1987.

Abramson, T. Educational Evaluations: Mentor/New Teacher Program: Retired Teachers as Consultants to New Teachers. New York: Center for Advanced Study in Education, City University of New York, 1986.

Gold, M.J. Multiple Case Study: Mentor/New Teacher Program: Retired Teachers as Consultants to New Teachers. New York: Center for Advanced Study in Education, City University of New York 1986.

Meyersohn, R. Sociological Evaluation. Retired Teachers as Consultants to New Teachers. New York: Center for Advanced Study in Education, City University of New York, 1986.

F. Summary and Conclusions

Retired teachers were able in this program to demonstrate how effective they could be in helping new teachers embark upon their professional careers in the schools. They secured the approbation of school administrators and the appreciation of the teachers they served. They took a high degree of satisfaction in the opportunity to continue using their expertise to help newcomers in their chosen profession. As retirees, they were able to provide this service without disrupting schedules or taking teachers out of the classroom. The following conclusions may be drawn from operation of the project.

- Mentors should be selected on the basis of their experience and their perceived aptitude for service as consultants.
- A training period is essential to help retirees make the transition from teaching children to consulting with adults.
- It is helpful if mentors do not have concurrent teaching duties with which mentoring may conflict.
- Field services to mentors are essential to assist them in their work.
- Supervisors are enthusiastic in praise of assistance that mentors give in the induction of new teachers; new teachers appreciate the help.
- Retirees take great satisfaction in rendering services to new teachers and in maintaining their professional activity.